

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In Re Application of: )  
John L. Schantz ) Confirmation No: 5415  
Serial No.: 10/757,807 ) Group Art Unit: 2619  
Filed: January 13, 2004 ) Examiner: Park, Jung H.  
For: Signaling Gate Aggregation ) Docket No.: 200310109-1

**APPEAL BRIEF UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 41.37**

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Sir:

This Appeal Brief under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37 is submitted in support of the Notice of Appeal filed April 20, 2009, responding to the final Office Action mailed February 19, 2009.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees are required to consider this Appeal Brief. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), and any fees required therefor are hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

### **I. Real Party in Interest**

The real party in interest is Hewlett-Packard Development Company, LP, a limited partnership established under the laws of the State of Texas and having a principal place of business at 20555 S.H. 249 Houston, TX 77070, U.S.A. (hereinafter "HPDC"). HPDC is a Texas limited partnership and is a wholly-owned affiliate of Hewlett-Packard Company, a Delaware Corporation, headquartered in Palo Alto, CA. The general or managing partner of HPDC is HPQ Holdings, LLC.

### **II. Related Appeals and Interferences**

There are no known related appeals or interferences that will affect or be affected by a decision in this Appeal.

### **III. Status of Claims**

Claims 1-8, 10-15, and 17-23 stand finally rejected. Claims 9 and 16 have been canceled. The final rejections of claims 1-8, 10-15, and 17-23 are appealed.

### **IV. Status of Amendments**

No claim amendments have been made subsequent to the final Office Action mailed February 19, 2009. The claims in the attached Claims Appendix reflect the present state of Applicant's claims.

## **V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter**

The claimed inventions are summarized below with reference numerals and references to the written description (“specification”) and drawings. The subject matter described in the following appears in the original disclosure at least where indicated, and may further appear in other places within the original disclosure.

Embodiments according to independent claim 1 describe an arrangement for coupling a SCP (Signaling Control Point) (Fig. 3B, 356) to signaling transfer point (STP) nodes of a SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Such an arrangement comprises an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) (Fig. 3A, 304) including at least a first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and a second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364). Applicant's specification, page 9, lines 16-18. The first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) is coupled between the SCP (Fig. 3B, 356) and a first STP node (Fig. 4, 402) of the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306), where the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) is coupled between the SCP (Fig. 3B, 356) and a second STP node of the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Applicant's specification, pages 9-10, lines 31-2. The first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, where an SS7 point code comprises an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Applicant's specification, pages 10-11, lines 32-6.

Embodiments according to independent claim 8 describe a communication network comprising an SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). The SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306) comprises a plurality of interconnected STP (Signaling Transfer Point) nodes. Applicant's specification, page 4, lines 3-5. The communication network further

comprises an application server (see page 4, lines 6-7; pages 12-13, lines 33-3) and an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) (Fig. 3A, 304) coupled between the application server (see page 4, lines 6-7; pages 12-13, lines 33-3) and the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306), the ASGA (Fig. 3A, 304) comprising at least a first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and a second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364). Applicant's specification, page 9, lines 16-18. The first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) is configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a first STP node (Fig. 4, 402) of the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) is configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a second STP node of the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Applicant's specification, pages 9-10, lines 31-2. The first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) communicate with the application server (see page 4, lines 6-7; pages 12-13, lines 33-3) using SS7-over-IP, wherein the first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, where an SS7 point code comprises an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Applicant's specification, page 4, lines 6-7; pages 5-6, lines 26-3; pages 12-13, lines 33-3; and pages 10-11, lines 32-6.

Embodiments according to independent claim 15 describe a method for transmitting SS7 messages between a SCP (Signaling Control Point) (Fig. 3B, 356) and a SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). The SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306) comprises a plurality of interconnected STP (Signaling Transfer Point) nodes. Applicant's specification, page 4, lines 3-5. The method further comprises providing an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) (Fig. 3A, 304), where the ASGA (Fig. 3A, 304) is coupled between

the SCP (Fig. 3B, 356) and the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306) and comprises at least a first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and a second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364). Applicant's specification, page 9, lines 16-18. The first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) is coupled with a first STP node (Fig. 4, 402) of the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) is coupled with a second STP node of the SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Applicant's specification, pages 9-10, lines 31-2. The first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364) are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, where an SS7 point code comprises an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network (Fig. 3A, 306). Such a method further comprises employing SS7-over-IP to communicate between the SCP (Fig. 3B, 356) and the first signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 362) and the second signaling gateway (Fig. 3B, 364). Applicant's specification, pages 5-6, lines 26-3 and pages 10-11, lines 32-6.

## **VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal**

The following grounds of rejections are to be reviewed on appeal:

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by *Elliott* (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0022237); and

Claims 2-8, 10-15, and 17-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Elliott* in view of *Dantu* (U.S. Patent No. 7,006,433).

## **VII. Arguments**

The Appellant respectfully submits that Applicant's claims 2-8, 10-15, and 17-23 are patentable over the cited art. The Appellant respectfully requests that the Board of Patent Appeals overturn the rejection of those claims at least for the reasons discussed below.

### **A. Applicant's Claim 1**

As provided in independent claim 1, Applicant claims:

An arrangement for coupling a SCP (Signaling Control Point) to signaling transfer point (STP) nodes of a SS7 network, comprising:

*an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) including at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second gateway being associated with and sharing a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network.*

(Emphasis added).

Appellant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is allowable for at least the reason that *Elliott* does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least "an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) including at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second gateway being associated with and sharing a single

SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network," as emphasized above.

For example, *Elliott* describes a packet-switched network that communicates with PSTN. See para. 0024. "In FIG. 2A, SS7 GWs 208, 210 receive signaling messages from signaling network 114 and communicate these messages to soft switch 204. Specifically, for SS7 signaled trunks, SS7 GWs 208, 210 can receive SS7 ISUP messages and transfer them to soft switch 204. SS7 GWs 208, 210 can and receive signaling messages from soft switch 204 and send SS7 ISUP messages out to signaling network 114." Para. 0595. Accordingly, *Elliott* does not disclose that a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway are part of an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement where the first signaling gateway is coupled between an SCP and an STP node and the second signaling gateway is coupled between the SCP and another STP node, and further where the first and second signaling gateways are associated with a single SS7 point code. For example, in FIG. 2A, SS7 gateway 208 is coupled between STP 250 and soft switch 204 and SS7 gateway 210 that is coupled between STP 252 and soft switch 204. Accordingly, SS7 gateway 210 and SS7 208 are not disclosed to be aggregated or to share the same point code. As such, *Elliott* fails to teach or suggest at least "an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) including at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second gateway being

associated with and sharing a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network,” as recited in claim 1.

The Office Action issued September 3, 2008 notes that a Soft Switch disclosed in *Elliott* may have a single Soft Switch point code. However, the Office Action fails to show that the Soft Switch disclosed in *Elliott* shares this point code with another Soft Switch. As such, *Elliott* fails to teach or suggest at least “an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) including at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second gateway being associated with and sharing a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network,” as recited in claim 1. (Emphasis added).

As a result, claim 1 is patentable over *Elliott*, and the rejection of claim 1 should be overturned.

## B. Applicant’s Claims 2-7

All of the claimed features of independent claim 1 are not taught and suggested by *Elliott*, as previously discussed. Since claims 2-7 depend from independent claim 1 and recite additional features, claims 2-7 are allowable over the cited art as a matter of law. Further, *Dantu* does not remedy the deficiencies of *Elliott* in disclosing the features of claim 1.

For example, *Dantu* describes an approach for transporting IN/AIN signaling over an IP-based network. *Dantu* discloses that “two SG nodes may be connected over an IP network to form an SG mated pair similar to the way STPs are provisioned in traditional SS7 networks (i.e., provisioning redundant pairs for increased reliability).” Col. 8, lines 59-63. It is not disclosed that each of the mated STPs is associated with or shares a single point code in *Dantu*. Further, the mated pair is not disclosed to be in an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement in the manner claimed. Since claims 2-7 depend from independent claim 1 and recite additional features, claims 2-7 are allowable over the cited art as a matter of law.

Accordingly, the rejection of claims 2-7 should be overturned.

### C. Applicant's Claims 8 and 10-14

As provided in independent claim 8, Applicant claims:

A communication network, comprising:  
a SS7 network comprising a plurality of interconnected STP (Signaling Transfer Point) nodes;  
an application server; and  
*an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) coupled between said application server and said SS7 network, said ASGA comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway communicating with said application server using SS7-over-IP, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network.*

(Emphasis added).

Appellant respectfully submits that independent claim 8 is allowable for at least the reason that *Elliott* in view of *Dantu* does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least "an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) coupled between said application server and said SS7 network, said ASGA comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway communicating with said application server using SS7-over-IP, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network," as emphasized above.

For example, *Elliott* describes a packet-switched network that communicates with PSTN. See para. 0024. "In FIG. 2A, SS7 GWs 208, 210 receive signaling messages from signaling network 114 and communicate these messages to soft switch 204. Specifically, for SS7 signaled trunks, SS7 GWs 208, 210 can receive SS7 ISUP messages and transfer them to soft switch 204. SS7 GWs 208, 210 can and receive signaling messages from soft switch 204 and send SS7 ISUP messages out to signaling network 114." Para. 0595. Accordingly, *Elliott* does not disclose that a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway are part of an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement where the first signaling gateway is coupled between an SCP and an STP node and the second signaling gateway is coupled between the SCP and another STP node, and further where the first and second signaling gateways are associated with a

single SS7 point code. For example, in FIG. 2A, SS7 gateway 208 is coupled between STP 250 and soft switch 204 and SS7 gateway 210 that is coupled between STP 252 and soft switch 204. Accordingly, SS7 gateway 210 and SS7 208 are not disclosed to be aggregated or to share the same point code. As such, *Elliott* fails to teach or suggest at least “an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) coupled between said application server and said SS7 network, said ASGA comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway communicating with said application server using SS7-over-IP, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network,” as recited in claim 8.

Further, *Dantu* describes an approach for transporting IN/AIN signaling over an IP-based network. *Dantu* discloses that “two SG nodes may be connected over an IP network to form an SG mated pair similar to the way STPs are provisioned in traditional SS7 networks (i.e., provisioning redundant pairs for increased reliability).” Col. 8, lines 59-63. It is not disclosed that each of the mated STPs is associated with or shares a single point code in *Dantu*. Further, the mated pair is not disclosed to be in an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement in the manner claimed. As such, *Dantu* individually or in combination with *Elliott* fails to teach or suggest at least “an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) coupled between said application server and

said SS7 network, said ASGA comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway communicating with said application server using SS7-over-IP, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network,” as recited in claim 8.

As a result, *Elliott* in view of *Dantu* fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claim 8, and the rejection of claim 8 should be overturned. Since claims 10-14 depend from claim 8 and recite additional features, claims 10-14 are allowable as a matter of law over the cited art of record.

**D. Applicant's Claims 15 and 17-23**

As provided in independent claim 15, Applicant claims:

A method for transmitting SS7 messages between a SCP (Signaling Control Point) and a SS7 network, said SS7 network comprising a plurality of interconnected STP (Signaling Transfer Point) nodes, comprising:

*providing an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA), said ASGA being coupled between said SCP and said SS7 network and comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled with a second STP node of said SS7 network, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network; and*

employing SS7-over-IP to communicate between said SCP and said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway.

(Emphasis added).

Appellant respectfully submits that independent claim 15 is allowable for at least the reason that *Elliott* in view of *Dantu* does not disclose, teach, or suggest at least "providing an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA), said ASGA being coupled between said SCP and said SS7 network and comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled with a second STP node of said SS7 network, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network," as emphasized above.

For example, *Elliott* describes a packet-switched network that communicates with PSTN. See para. 0024. "In FIG. 2A, SS7 GWs 208, 210 receive signaling messages

from signaling network 114 and communicate these messages to soft switch 204. Specifically, for SS7 signaled trunks, SS7 GWs 208, 210 can receive SS7 ISUP messages and transfer them to soft switch 204. SS7 GWs 208, 210 can and receive signaling messages from soft switch 204 and send SS7 ISUP messages out to signaling network 114.” Para. 0595. Accordingly, *Elliott* does not disclose that a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway are part of an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement where the first signaling gateway is coupled between an SCP and an STP node and the second signaling gateway is coupled between the SCP and another STP node, and further where the first and second signaling gateways are associated with a single SS7 point code. For example, in FIG. 2A, SS7 gateway 208 is coupled between STP 250 and soft switch 204 and SS7 gateway 210 that is coupled between STP 252 and soft switch 204. Accordingly, SS7 gateway 210 and SS7 208 are not disclosed to be aggregated or to share the same point code. As such, *Elliott* fails to teach or suggest at least “providing an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA), said ASGA being coupled between said SCP and said SS7 network and comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled with a second STP node of said SS7 network, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network,” as recited in claim 15.

Further, *Dantu* describes an approach for transporting IN/AIN signaling over an IP-based network. *Dantu* discloses that “two SG nodes may be connected over an IP

network to form an SG mated pair similar to the way STPs are provisioned in traditional SS7 networks (i.e., provisioning redundant pairs for increased reliability).” Col. 8, lines 59-63. It is not disclosed that each of the mated STPs is associated with or shares a single point code in *Dantu*. Further, the mated pair is not disclosed to be in an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement in the manner claimed. As such, *Dantu* individually or in combination with *Elliott* fails to teach or suggest at least “providing an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA), said ASGA being coupled between said SCP and said SS7 network and comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled with a second STP node of said SS7 network, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network,” as recited in claim 15.

As a result, *Elliott* in view of *Dantu* fails to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness for claim 15, and the rejection of claim 15 should be withdrawn. Since claims 17-23 depend from claim 15 and recite additional features, claims 17-23 are allowable as a matter of law over the cited art of record.

### **III. Conclusion**

In summary, it is Appellant's position that Applicant's claims are patentable over the applied cited art references and that the rejection of these claims should be overturned. Appellant therefore respectfully requests that the Board of Appeals overturn the Examiner's rejection and allow Applicant's pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /Charles W. Griggers/

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### **Claims Appendix under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(viii)**

The following are the claims that are involved in this Appeal.

1. An arrangement for coupling a SCP (Signaling Control Point) to signaling transfer point (STP) nodes of a SS7 network, comprising:

an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) including at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled between said SCP and a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second gateway being associated with and sharing a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network.

2. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway communicate with said SCP using SS7-over-IP

3. The arrangement of claim 2 wherein said first signaling gateway communicates with said first STP node using HSL (High Speed Link).

4. The arrangement of claim 3 wherein all communication links employed for transmitting SS7 messages between said first STP node and said SCP traverse said first signaling gateway.

5. The arrangement of claim 2 wherein said ASGA is capable of providing 32 HSL links of bandwidth into said SS7 network.

6. The arrangement of claim 2 wherein all communication links employed for transmitting SS7 messages between said first STP node and said SCP traverse said first signaling gateway.

7. The arrangement of claim 1 wherein each SS7 link between said SCP and said ASGA is mapped onto a SCTP (Stream Control Transport Protocol) connection.

8. A communication network, comprising:

a SS7 network comprising a plurality of interconnected STP (Signaling Transfer Point) nodes;

an application server; and

an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA) coupled between said application server and said SS7 network, said ASGA comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being configured to transmit and receive SS7 messages with a second STP node of said SS7 network, said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway communicating with said application server using SS7-over-IP, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network.

9. Canceled

10. The communication network of claim 8 wherein said ASGA is capable of providing 32 HSL links of bandwidth into said SS7 network.

11. The communication network of claim 10 wherein said first signaling gateway communicates with said first STP node using HSL (High Speed Link).

12. The communication network of claim 11, wherein all communication links employed for transmitting SS7 messages between said first STP node and said application server traverse said first signaling gateway.

13. The communication network of claim 8 wherein each SS7 link between said application server and said ASGA is mapped onto a SCTP (Stream Control Transport Protocol) connection.

14. The communication network of claim 8 wherein said second signaling gateway communicates with said second STP node using 56 Kbits/second SS7 links.

15. A method for transmitting SS7 messages between a SCP (Signaling Control Point) and a SS7 network, said SS7 network comprising a plurality of interconnected STP (Signaling Transfer Point) nodes, comprising:

providing an aggregated signaling gateway arrangement (ASGA), said ASGA being coupled between said SCP and said SS7 network and comprising at least a first signaling gateway and a second signaling gateway, said first signaling gateway being coupled with a first STP node of said SS7 network, said second signaling gateway being coupled with a second STP node of said SS7 network, wherein said first signaling gateway and said second gateway are associated with and share a single SS7 point code, an SS7 point code comprising an identification code used to identify a node within an SS7 network; and

employing SS7-over-IP to communicate between said SCP and said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway.

16. Canceled

17. The method of claim 15 wherein said ASGA is capable of providing a greater bandwidth throughput into said SS7 network than a maximum bandwidth throughput into said SS7 network of either one of said first signaling gateway and said second signaling gateway.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein said first signaling gateway communicates with said first STP node using HSL (High Speed Link).

19. The method of claim 18 wherein all communication links employed for transmitting SS7 messages between said first STP node and said SCP traverse said first signaling gateway.

20. The method of claim 15 wherein each SS7 link between said SCP and said ASGA is mapped onto a SCTP (Stream Control Transport Protocol) connection.

21. The method of claim 15 wherein said first signaling gateway transmits SS7 traffic to said first STP node using only HSL links.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein said second signaling gateway transmits SS7 traffic to said second STP node using only 56 Kbits/second links.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein said first signaling gateway is coupled to said first STP node via at least one active HSL link and at least one inactive 56 Kbits/second link.

**Evidence Appendix under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(ix)**

There is no extrinsic evidence to be considered in this Appeal. Therefore, no evidence is presented in this Appendix.

**Related Proceedings Appendix under 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(x)**

There are no related proceedings to be considered in this Appeal. Therefore, no such proceedings are identified in this Appendix.